

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD) released the following statement today regarding the Republican budget. Based on Congressional Budget Office calculations, under the Republican budget, a Maryland senior entering Medicare in 2022 would pay \$6400 more under the Republican budget than if they were entering the traditional Medicare program.

“Budgets are about values and priorities – and the Republican budget makes the wrong choices, financing tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans on the backs of seniors and the disabled.

“Democrats are concerned about the deficit because it is a serious threat to our economic prosperity and our children’s opportunities. That’s why President Obama and House Democrats have put forward plans that get our debt under control, keep our entitlement programs strong, and invest in the future of our economy. Those are our Democratic priorities. We acted on those priorities when we passed the Affordable Care Act, which reduces the deficit and keeps the Medicare trust fund solvent for an additional 12 years. And we remain committed to strengthening vital programs like Medicare, while protecting their integrity.

“But we’ve also seen Republican priorities on display. Their budget plan would end the Medicare guarantee, giving seniors less coverage each year. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that the Republican plan would cause seniors’ Medicare costs to double or even triple. It will also cause seniors to pay more for prescription drugs.

“That’s why advocates for seniors and health care experts are strongly critical of Republican priorities. The AARP said that Republican plan ‘would simply shift [health care] costs onto the backs of people in Medicare. It would undermine Medicare’s promise of secure health coverage.’ And a letter from 192 health economists and health care experts read that Republicans’ plans for Medicare ‘would undermine essential protections for millions of vulnerable people.’

“But even as it ends Medicare as we know it, Republicans’ plan gives the wealthiest Americans trillions in additional tax cuts—after a decade in which the richest 1% saw their incomes increase by an average of \$250,000 per person, while the bottom 90% actually saw their incomes decline.

“And—in large part because of those tax cuts—the Republican plan doesn’t even balance the budget! Republicans have made their priorities clear: tax cuts for the best-off come ahead of investing in our future, providing for our seniors’ health care, or getting our country out of debt.

“Those same priorities led to a 115% increase in our debt and a decade of stagnation for our middle class under President Bush. Today, there is no reason to think that they would have a different result.”